**What is claimed is:**

**1.** A method for transmitting an indication of a communications protocol supported by a first communications node, the method comprising the steps of:

i) transmitting from a second communications node to the first communications node a request for a protocol supported by the first communications node; and

ii) responsive to the request, transmitting a reply message comprising a parameter indicative of a Third Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) Technical Specification (TS) document number defining at least a protocol supported by the first communications node.

**2.** The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the method further comprises the step of:

iii) computing the parameter by abridging the 3GPP TS document number prior to transmitting the reply message comprising the parameter.

**3.** The method claimed in claim 2, wherein step iii) comprises the step of:

discarding a header of the 3GPP TS document number;

discarding all characters following and including a last period of the 3GPP TS document number; and

discarding all spaces of the 3GPP TS document number and capitalizing the 3GPP TS document number.

**4.** The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the first communications node is a system management agent, and the second communications node is a system management manager of a management system.

**5.** The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the first communications node is a getXXXIRPVersion request message and the reply message is a getXXXIRPVersion reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one XXX IRP Version supported by the first communications node.

**6.** The method claimed in claim 5, wherein the getXXXIRPVersion request message is a getAlarmIRPVersion request and the getXXXIRPVersion reply message is a getAlarmIRPVersion reply message comprising the parameter indicative of the at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one Alarm IRP Version supported by the first communications node.

**7.** The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the first communications node is a getNotificationCategory request message and the reply message is a getNotificationCategory reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one notification category supported by the first communications node.

**8.** The method claimed in claim 7, wherein the method further comprises the step of:

following the receipt of the getNotificationCategory reply message by the Manager, transmitting from the Agent to the Manager at least one Alarm Notification message comprising the parameter indicative of the 3GPP TS document number.

**9.** The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the first communications node is a getNetworkResourceSchemaId request message and the reply message is a getNetworkResourceSchemaId reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one network resource schema identification (ID) supported by the first communications node.

**10.** The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the parameter is indicative of a plurality of 3GPP TS document numbers identifying a plurality of protocols supported by the first communications node.

**11.** A management system comprising:

a second node;

a first node receiving from the second communications node a request for a protocol supported by the first communications node;

wherein responsive to the request, the first node transmits to the second node a reply message comprising a parameter indicative of a Third Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) Technical Specification (TS) document number defining at least a protocol supported by the first communications node.

**12.** The management system claimed in claim 11, wherein the first node computes the parameter by abridging the 3GPP TS document number prior to transmitting the reply message comprising the parameter to the second node.

**13.** The management system claimed in claim 12, wherein the first node computes the abridged 3GPP TS document version number by:

discarding a header of the 3GPP TS document number;

discarding all characters following and including a last period of the 3GPP TS document number; and

discarding all spaces of the 3GPP TS document number and capitalizing the 3GPP TS document number.

**14.** The management system claimed in claim 11, wherein the first communications node is a system management agent, and the second communications node is a system management manager of a management system.

**15.** The management system claimed in claim 11, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the first communications node is a getXXXIRPVersion request message and the reply message is a getXXXIRPVersion reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one XXX IRP Version supported by the first communications node.

**16.** The management system claimed in claim 15, wherein the getXXXIRPVersion request message is a getAlarmIRPVersion request and the getXXXIRPVersion reply message is a getAlarmIRPVersion reply message comprising the parameter indicative of the at least one 3GPP TS document numbers identifying at least one Alarm IRP Version supported by the first communications node.

**17.** The management system claimed in claim 11, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the first communications node is a getNotificationCategory request message and the reply message is a getNotificationCategory reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one notification category supported by the first communications node.

**18.** The management system claimed in claim 17, wherein following the receipt of the getNotificationCategory reply message by the Manager, the Agent transmits to the Manager at least one Alarm Notification message comprising the parameter indicative of the 3GPP TS document number.

**19.** The management system claimed in claim 11, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the first communications node is a getNetworkResourceSchemaId request message and the reply message is a getNetworkResourceSchemaId reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one network resource schema identification (ID) supported by the first communications node.

**20.** The management system claimed in claim 11, wherein the parameter is indicative of a plurality of 3GPP TS document numbers identifying a plurality of protocols supported by the first communications node.

**21.** An agent receiving from a manager a request for a protocol supported by the Agent, and responsive to the request, transmitting a reply message comprising a parameter indicative of a Third Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) Technical Specification (TS) document number defining at least a protocol supported by the agent.

**22.** The agent claimed in claim 21, wherein the agent first computes the parameter by abridging the 3GPP TS document number prior to transmitting the reply message comprising the parameter to the manager.

**23.** The agent claimed in claim 22, wherein the agent computes the abridged the 3GPP TS document number by:

discarding a header of the 3GPP TS document number;

discarding all characters following and including a last period of the 3GPP TS document number; and

discarding all spaces of the 3GPP TS document number and capitalizing the 3GPP TS document number.

**24.** The agent claimed in claim 21, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the agent is a getXXXIRPVersion request message and the reply message is a getXXXIRPVersion reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one XXX IRP Versions supported by the agent.

**25.** The agent claimed in claim 24, wherein the getXXXIRPVersion request message is a getAlarmIRPVersion request and the getXXXIRPVersion reply message is a getAlarmIRPVersion reply message comprising the parameter indicative of the at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one Alarm IRP Version supported by the agent.

**26.** The agent claimed in claim 21, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the agent is a getNotificationCategory request message and the reply message is a getNotificationCategory reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one notification category supported by the agent.

**27.** The agent claimed in claim 26, wherein following the receipt of the getNotificationCategory reply message by the Manager, the agent transmits to the Manager at least one Alarm Notification message comprising the parameter indicative of the 3GPP TS document number.

**28.** The agent claimed in claim 21, wherein the request for a protocol supported by the agent is a getNetworkResourceSchemaId request message and the reply message is a getNetworkResourceSchemaId reply message comprising the parameter indicative of at least one 3GPP TS document number identifying at least one network resource schema identification (ID) supported by the agent.

**29.** The agent claimed in claim 21, wherein the parameter is indicative of a plurality of 3GPP TS document numbers identifying a plurality of protocols supported by the agent.